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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOM 15575

E.O. 12356: DECL: 12/24/86
TAGS: PEPR, UR, US, VT, AF
SUBJECT: ANDROPOV SEES BARRAK; LE DUAN

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1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT) 001507000

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2. PRAYDA DECEMBER 24 FRONT-PAGES SHORT TASS ACCOUNTS OF ANDROPOV MEETINGS DECEMBER 23 WITH VIETNAMESE PARTY CHIEF LE DUAN AND DRA LEADER BABRAK KARMAL.

3. BABRAK MEETING: THE "COMRADELY DISCUSSION" IS DESCRIBED BY TASS AS HAVING TAKEN PLACE IN A "WARM, COMRADELY ATMOSPHERE." THE TWO LEADERS:

-- EXAMINED THE STATE OF "THE RELATIONS OF TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP AND GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS BETWEEN THE USSR AND AFGHANISTAN";

-- REVIEWED WITH SATISFACTION POPULAR REFORMS BEING CONDUCTED BY THE DRA;

-- EMPHASIZED THAT "THE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE AND CALM IN THE ENTIRE TERRITORY OF AFGHANISTAN IS THE UNCEASING OUTSIDE ARMED INTERFERENCE IN (AFGHANISTAN'S) INTERNAL AFFAIRS, BEING COMMITTED BY THE IMPERIALISM OF THE USA AND ITS AUXILIARIES."

-- REAFFIRMED THEIR "FIRM INTENTION TO ACHIEVE A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT OF THE SITUATION AROUND AFGHANISTAN ON THE BASIS OF KNOWN PROPOSALS OF THE DRA GOVERNMENT."

4. LE DUAN MEETING: MEETING IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF "CORDIALITY AND FULL MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING." LE DUAN AND ANDROPOV REPORTEDLY:

-- EXCHANGED VIEWS ON CERTAIN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS, "AMONG THEM THE SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST
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ASIA. AND QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE CONVERSION OF THAT REGION INTO A ZONE OF PEACE AND STABILITY."

-- EMPHASIZED THEIR DETERMINATION FURTHER TO DEVELOP AND "PERFECT" THE RELATIONSHIP.

COMMENT

5. THE BABRAK MEETING CONTINUES HIGH PROFILE

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ATTENTION GIVEN THE AFGHAN LEADER SINCE HIS INITIAL NOVEMBER 12 MEETING WITH ANDROPOV. SINCE THAT EXCHANGE BABRAK'S SPEECHES AND ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN EXTENSIVELY AND PROMINENTLY REPORTED BY THE SOVIET MEDIA. HIS ACTIVITIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVITIES THIS WEEK (A PRESS CONFERENCE WITH ZAHYATIN AND ZAGLADIN, AND AN ADDRESS TO THE JOINT ASSEMBLY) SEEMED DESIGNED TO BOLSTER FURTHER HIS IMAGE AS AN EFFECTIVE AND INDEPENDENT LEADER. FOLLOWING ON THE HEELS OF PRAVOA'S UNCOMPROMISING DECEMBER 16 EDITORIAL ON AFGHANISTAN, YESTERDAY'S MEETING SHOULD PUT TO REST LINGERING DOUBTS THAT MOSCOW MIGHT BE FLIRTING WITH THE IDEA OF A SOLUTION IN AFGHANISTAN WHICH DOES NOT INVOLVE BABRAK.

6. THE LE DUAN MEETING, THE HIGHEST LEVEL SOVIET-VIETNAMESE EXCHANGE SINCE THE FIRST STEPS EARLIER THIS YEAR TO IMPROVE SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS, SIMILARLY SERVES TO DEMONSTRATE THE ESSENTIAL SOLIDARITY OF THE MOSCOW-HANOI RELATIONSHIP, IN THE FACE OF CONTINUING CHINESE DEMANDS FOR MOVEMENT TOWARD RESOLUTION OF THE KAMPUCHEA PROBLEM. THE TASS REPORT REFERENCE TO THE NEED TO "PERFECT" THE RELATIONSHIP.

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HOWEVER, MAY REFLECT CONTINUING -- ALTHOUGH AT THIS

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STAGE APPARENTLY MINOR -- DIFFERENCES OVER HANOI'S
UTILIZATION OF SOVIET AID. END COMMENT.

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7. KABUL MINIMIZE CONSIDERED. HARTMAN

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